



# The John Knox Liturgy,

OR SCOTTISH

“Book of Common Order.”

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## A LECTURE

BY

REV. T. H. FLEMING, M. A.,

**Sir Sandford Fleming**

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

ST. STEPHEN'S CHURCH GUILD,

ST. JOHN, N. B.,

AND PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE GUILD.

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

REV. A. POLLOK, D. D.,

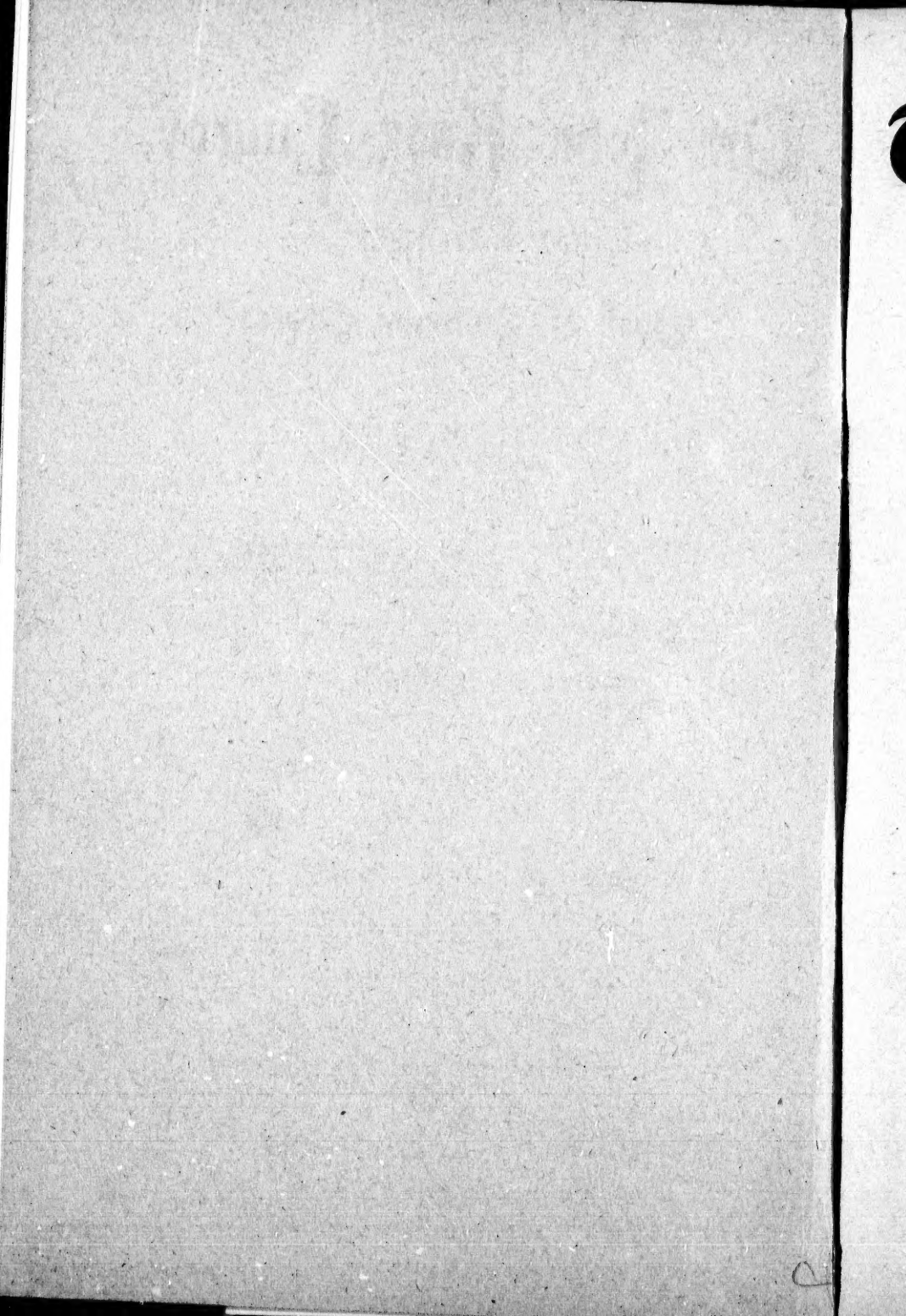
*Principal of the Presbyterian College, Halifax, N. S.*

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## INTRODUCTION.

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The following lecture is a most seasonable contribution to the literature of this subject and is calculated to render valuable aid to a movement which has begun among non-liturgical churches. For such as are not specially familiar with the subject this lecture, on account of its large accumulation of facts, will require patient thought and repeated persual. Dealing with the whole subject of worship, including the ordinary service of the Lord's Day and special services, it covers a large space upon all of which it furnishes minute and interesting details. To the execution of his work Mr. Fotheringham has brought a very careful examination of the proper authorities and the reader has, without much trouble to himself, the advantage of studying results which have cost the lecturer very extensive reading. To all this the lecturer has brought a clear plain style and an earnest devout spirit. It is indeed time that this subject received some attention from the Presbyterian Church. While none of our schemes should be neglected, a little more might be done to promote religion itself and the cultivation of personal holiness—a little more to make the church service a resting place for the weary and heavy-laden, and a balm for wounded spirits. There is reason to believe that at the present time there is a number of our people who are longing for some improvement in our worship, and this lecture ought to guide this movement by directing attention not to other churches as models but to the wise and seemly forms left us by our Fathers of the first and second Reformation.

ALLAN POLLOK.

## THE JOHN KNOX LITURGY.

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In reference to the conduct of divine service two opinions obtained among the reformers ; that of Luther, who would retain as much of the old as possible, rejecting only what was contrary to Scripture, and that of Calvin, who would ordain nothing which was not distinctly commanded by God. The consequence of this is that the Lutherans retained a liturgy as rich and beautiful as the Roman, while the churches which adhered to the Genevan model were distinguished by extreme simplicity of ritual observance. The Presbyterian church of Scotland belongs to the latter class. When in 1560, the old order of things was overturned and the celebration of the mass made a penal offence, the church for four years used the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI. This was substantially the English Prayer Book of to-day, before its revision in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. In the framing of this Knox, who was then one of the royal chaplains, had no small share. He is undoubtedly mainly responsible for the note at the end of the communion service explanatory of the kneeling attitude and nicknamed by our ritualistic friends "the Black Rubric." Surely our pride is pardonable when we open the Anglican Prayer Book, and, pointing to this paragraph, exclaim, with Dr. M'Crie, "John Knox, his mark."

There was much in the English service book that was distasteful to the Scottish reformers, and it was used only in part, and because a better was not available. As soon as books could be procured from the continent it was replaced by what is known as the "Order of Geneva." This was originally drawn up by Fox, the Martyrologist, Whittingham, afterwards Dean of Durham, Knox and two others, for the use of the English refugees at Frankfort, but owing to the factious conduct of Dr. Cox and the Anglican party it was never used there. It was, however, adopted by the English congregation at Geneva, of which Knox was one of the ministers from 1556 to 1559. This "Order of Geneva" was revised, enlarged and adapted to Scotland by the General Assembly and enjoined to be used in "the administration of the sacraments, and solemnization of marriages, and burial of the dead." It is popular-



ly known as the "John Knox Liturgy," but its correct title is "The Form of Prayers and Ministration of the Sacraments, &c., used in the English Church at Geneva, approved and received by the Church of Scotland." In the first book of Discipline it is called "The Book of our Common Order," but afterwards, when a complete metrical Psalter was added, this usurped popularly the first place and the whole was known as "The Psalm Book," its title being "The Psalms of David in Metre, whereunto is added the prayers commonly used in the kirk and private houses."

When, just before the calling of the Westminster Assembly, the Scottish church had appointed a committee to prepare a new directory, Alexander Henderson, who was engaged in the work, writes that he finds himself unequal to the task and says: "nor could I take upon me to set down other forms of prayer than we have in our Psalm Book, penned by our great and divine Reformers." This is the only authorized Liturgy of the Scottish church. It was in general use for nearly one hundred years, and regularly read in the parish churches at divine service. It has never been disallowed by the church, although superseded by the Westminster Directory, and any new form of service, to be a genuine Presbyterian production, should be based upon it. A description and analysis of this venerable book, so beloved by our fathers, should be of the deepest interest.

The general principles governing the construction of this and other reformed liturgies is thus concisely stated by Rev. C. G. M'Crie in his Cunningham Lectures on "The Public Worship of Presbyterian Scotland:" "The principle regulating all the divisions and details of the Scottish Presbyterian book of ritual is the sole and supreme authority of scripture in all that enters into the essence of public worship. The compilers of the Reformation subordinate standards did not undertake to lay down an order for every detail, in every particular. They acted upon a distinction between what is necessary if there is to be the face of a visible church in the land, and what may be profitable and desirable, but is not absolutely necessary. In the latter category they placed the singing of psalms, the selection of passages of Scripture for public reading, the number of weekday services, the frequency or rarity of the dispensation of the Lord's Supper. These and such like matters, not entering into the essence of divine service, they left to be determined by each particular congregation according to the discretion of ministers and elders. The things deemed 'utterly necessary' were the preaching of the word, the administration of the sacraments, prayer, catechising and discipline. In the case of these necessary things the principle laid down and strictly applied was that for each part of the worship there must be divine sanction in the form of Scripture warrant, all professed honoring of God not contained in His Holy Word, it was maintained, is not worship, but idolatry," and in this view we con-

cur, believing that "the second commandment forbiddeth the worshipping of God by images, or in any other way not appointed in His Word." We shall see that the liturgy in question is loyal to this principle. On opening the book the first thing that strikes us is

#### THE CALENDAR

with the dates of the church festivals, such "Lenton," "Pasche," "Whitsonday," "Circumsion," "Purif. Mariae," etc., but these were retained, not because the church observed these days, but because the dates of fairs and other secular transactions had been so long regulated by them that it was convenient to have the times of their recurrence readily available. All such festivals of human appointment were abolished, without exception. Whether we agree with Calvin, who retained the chief holy days of the Christian year, or with the Scottish reformers who, more rigidly logical, abolish them, the fact is beyond question that the only day recognized by the Presbyterian church as binding upon the conscience is the weekly Sabbath, although she claims the right to appoint days of fasting or thanksgiving as occasion may require. Then follows the "Names of

#### THE FAIRES OF SCOTLAND.

These were generally held on the day sacred to the patron saint of the place, or other religious festival of pre-reformation times. It is so long since Scottish churches were called by the names of the saints to whom they were originally dedicated that ecclesiastical antiquarians not unfrequently find in the date of the parish fair, compared with the Roman calendar, a cue to the name of the forgotten saint whom the founders wished to honor, or whose relics were deposited beneath the altar. The book proper begins with

#### "THE CONFESSION OF FAITH

used in the congregation of Geneva. Received and approved by the Church of Scotland." Dr. Sprott informs us that this confession was held in high esteem in England and was, as late as 1676, bound up with the Book of Common Prayer. It is simply an amplification of the Apostles' Creed, clause by clause. This is followed by "A Brief Statement regarding

#### MINISTERS AND THE METHOD OF THEIR ELECTION,

with an account of the character and duties of elders and deacons," to which is appended a note pointing out the need of the church for a "fourth kind of minister," namely, theological professor. This the reformers and even the divines of the Westminster assembly, held to be as much an "order," or office of divine appointment, as the Pastor, Elder or Deacon.



The modern church does not share their views upon this point, but the other principles contained in this section are as firmly held as ever—(1) that to the minister belongs the “preaching of the word and ministering the sacraments;” (2) that the people have a right to choose their spiritual advisers; (3) that the office of elder concerns the discipline of the congregation and not “the preaching of the word and ministration of sacraments;” (4) that deacons take charge of the benevolent funds of the church and care for the sick and the poor. The instructions given in regard to the weekly meeting of the church officers are full of practical wisdom and display a thorough knowledge of human nature, they are “diligently to examine all such faults and suspicions as may be espied, not only among others but chiefly among themselves, lest they seem to be capable of that which our Saviour Christ reproved in the Pharisees, who could espy a mote in another man’s eye, and could not see a beam in their own.” A weekly meeting was also held, of a public character, for which an order is provided. It is entitled “An order for the interpretation of the Scriptures and Answering of Doubts.” In it free discussion was allowed and out of it the Presbytery grew in course of time. For we ought to notice that the subordinate courts of the church were of later organization than the General Assembly and derived their powers from it. In some places the meetings of Presbytery are opened still by a similar exercise. The writer once took part in what was merely a modernized form of the old practice at the opening of the annual meeting of the Presbytery of Benicia in California, and can testify to the spiritual refreshing experienced by both Presbytery and people on the occasion. The Prayer Book proper begins with “The form and order of the

#### ELECTION OF THE SUPERINTENDENT,

which may serve in the election of all other ministers; at Edinburgh, the 9th of March, Anno 1560, John Knox, Minister.” This is the service used at the induction of Rev. John Spottiswood as Superintendent of Lothian and contains address and prayers in full. Knox himself is the author of it.

This is the only form of ordination contained in the book and it is noticeable that the rubric regarding the specific act of setting apart contains no reference to the laying on of hands. It is as follows; “The prayer being ended, the rest of the ministers and elders of that church, if any be present, in sign of their consent, *shall take the elected by the hand*. The chief minister shall give the benediction as followeth.” It is true that for a few years after the Reformation the imposition of hands was deemed unnecessary, but it is required by the Second Book of Discipline (1578). Most of the clergy of that time had been ordained to the priesthood and a mere ritual irregularity could not invalidate the orders of any one.

The office of Superintendent in no respect corresponded with that of Bishop in the Episcopal Church. Although some who were "commonly called" bishops were appointed Superintendents they did not hold this position *ex officio* but by designation of the General Assembly, and those bishops who were not entrusted with the office were forbidden to give collation to any benefice without the written consent of the Superintendent. The great lack of qualified ministers and the unsettled conditions of affairs during the church's transition stage, made it necessary to appoint men who should give special attention to the administration of ecclesiastical concerns. The same necessity has revived the ancient office in Canada. The Rev. Dr. Robertson in the North West, Rev. A. Findlay in Northern Ontario, and Rev. Jas. Ross in the Presbytery of St. John discharge duties in many respects similar to those of the ancient Superintendent, and the title is given to them. The section which follows :—

#### THE ORDER OF THE ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE

defines the nature of discipline and the objects to be kept in view in exercising it, and is followed by "The Order of Excommunication" and "of Public Repentance, Used in the Church of Scotland, and commanded to be printed by the General Assembly of the same, in the month of June, 1571." This was drawn up by Knox at the request of the Assembly. In it jurisdiction is claimed over all baptized persons "whether the offender be Papist or Protestant : for it is no reason that under pretense of diversity of religion open impiety should be suffered in the visible body of Christ Jesus." The reformers of the church of Scotland disclaimed the idea of founding a new church. "To call us Calvinians," they say, "and the Reformed churches, Calvinian Reformed Churches, is to disgrace the true churches of Christ, and to symbolize with the Papists who call themselves the Catholic Church. \* \* \* They who apprehend danger in names (as there is a great deal of danger in them) ought not \* \* \* to join with Papists in giving names of sects unto the reformed churches." So wrote the commissioners to the Westminster Assembly as quoted by Dr. Sprott, who adds, "On this point of nomenclature the Reformed were more particular than the other branches of the Reformation. Their instincts led them to avoid local or divisional names. Others might call them Protestants, Calvinists, or Presbyterians, though this name was of later growth, but for themselves they claim to be of the Catholic Church Reformed." They named the annals of the church "The Book of the Universal (i. e. Catholic) Kirk," and vigorously defended the validity of their orders. They did not view with complacent toleration and foolish patronage the assumption of the sacred office by those who are not regularly called and set apart by the Church. They claimed to wield all the

legitimate authority of the old priesthood and so stoutly did they maintain their divine vocation that Milton, that uncompromising independent, declared "new presbyter" to be but "old priest, writ large." "Yes," they would have replied, "it is priest restored to its New Testament form." In virtue of this view of the ministerial office the sentence of excommunication as well as that of absolution is couched in the most authoritative language—"In the name of the Eternal God and of His Son Jesus Christ, we pronounce the said N. excommunicate and cursed in that his wicked fact," &c. There were no dramatic accompaniments of "bell, book, and candle," but the proudest nobles in Scotland have humbled themselves in order to receive absolution from the dread sentence of the church, though spoken by a simple presbyter. Following this is "An Order for

#### THE VISITATION OF THE SICK;

with a Prayer to be said in Visiting the Sick." This is a testimony to the high estimation in which the church held this duty. Nowadays the visit of the minister is not invested with any special character, but formerly it was deemed, as it should be, of the very greatest benefit when rightly used. In all the Reformed liturgies there is an office of this kind, but the Scottish differs from the Anglican in prescribing no set form of words, but directs the minister, "like a skilful physician" to frame "his medicine as the disease requireth." The "Order for the

#### BURIAL OF THE DEAD"

is exceedingly brief. There is to be no ceremonial whatever at the grave, but the minister and the people may repair to the church and a suitable exhortation may be there given. The Westminster Directory has the same prohibition of prayer at the grave. So great has been the dread of the church lest false views of our relationship to the deceased and the efficacy of our prayers in regard to them should creep in that it is quite within the memory of many living when they heard the first prayer offered up at a grave by a Presbyterian minister. The writer in the early part of his ministry officiated at a funeral in the church yard of a neighboring congregation and, as he usually does, read the simple and beautiful service of the modern "Book of Common Order." He was surprised to learn that one of the worthy elders of that church had come to the next meeting of presbytery in order to lay a charge against him, not for reading the prayers, but for offering up any prayer at all at the grave. The good man was persuaded to refrain from his intended action, and so the object of his censure missed the opportunity of becoming famous as a "heretic." Evidently the minister of that church had been accustomed to adhere strictly to the traditional rite. A better feeling now prevails. The danger is so remote and the propriety

of committing the dust of those dear to us to the bosom of mother earth with words of Christian hope is so evident that there are few Presbyterian ministers, at least in America, who do not conform to the general custom. We now come to a section which interests us more than any of those which preceded it,

## THE ORDER OF PUBLIC WORSHIP.

The opening rubric is as follows: "When the congregation is assembled at the hour appointed the minister useth this Confession, or like in effect, exhorting the people diligently to examine themselves, following in their hearts the tenor of his words." What follows is the common form of all the Reformed liturgies and is said to have been composed by Calvin, but it is probably taken from pre-reformation sources. It is substantially, but not verbally, identical with the confession in the Anglican communion service. Alternate forms are given designed to be used on special occasions.

The rubric after the confession is, "This done, the People sing a plain tune: which ended, the Minister prayeth for the assistance of God's Holy Spirit, as the same shall move his heart, and so proceedeth to the sermon; using after the prayer following, or such like." This is a "Prayer for the whole estate of Christ's Church," and is derived mainly from Calvin's liturgy. It closes with the Lord's Prayer, which is in turn followed by the apostle's Creed, with the following preface: "Almighty and Everlasting God, vouchsafe we beseech Thee to grant us perfect continuance in Thy lively faith, augmenting the same in us daily, till we grow to the full measure of our perfection in Christ, whereof we make our Confession saying, I believe &c." The Lord's Prayer and the "Belief," or Apostles' Creed, were universally recited in public worship up to the time of the sectarian "novations" which troubled the church in the early part of the 17th century and which have substituted themselves for the ancient and Catholic customs in almost every act of our worship, so that now they are claimed as genuine Presbyterianism, although the saintliest men of the time denounced them and warned of the bigotry and schism which would come in along with them. We live in more liberal days. In most of our churches the Lord's Prayer is recited by the minister, and in an increasing number the congregation unite with him. Quite a number especially in the United States, repeat the creed, and no doubt it will soon be so common among ourselves as not to excite remark.

After singing a Psalm the congregation is dismissed with the benediction, which is given in both the Apostolic and Aaronic forms. We note, however, that the pronouns are in the first person and not the second—"us," not "you." This is evidently intentional because the "Book of Geneva" has the usual word. Why this was done we do not know, but it was not because of any doctrinal divergence from the other churches in the direction

of Independency. The Church has always held that the pronouncing of the Benediction is a Ministerial act, and that it ought not to be uttered by one who was not in Holy Orders. It has always been considered improper, in the old country at least, for a probationer, who is an unordained man although licensed to preach, to use the second person, or to raise his hands in the attitude of blessing. This is also the doctrine of our Westminster symbols. In "The Form of Church Government" amongst the duties pertaining to the Minister is that of "blessing the people from the Lord."

The Scottish service differed from that of England in allowing the Minister to depart from its *ipsissima verba* and even encouraging him in doing so, accordingly a rubric at the end declares that he is free thus to act. A number of prayers are added suitable for various occasions most of them either composed, or more likely selected, by Calvin and Knox.

#### THE MANNER OF ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

which follows the Order of Public Worship, contemplates the observance of that ordinance once a month, and begins, in accordance with the governing principle already referred to, with the reading of the Scripture authority for the rite. In the order of the service it immediately follows the Apostles' Creed and precedes the benediction. The Exhortation, or "Fencing of the Tables," which follows the reading of the "Warrant," is in part identical with that in the Anglican service and in part taken from the "Book of Geneva" and "Calvin's Liturgy." Its closing words are essentially the *Sursum Corda* of the ancient rituals, to which the reformers pointed as proving that the notion of a local corporeal presence was a modern heresy. Its noble words are worth quoting: "The only way to dispose our souls to receive nourishment, relief, and quickening of His substance, is to lift up our minds by faith above all things worldly and sensible and thereby to enter into heaven, that we may find and receive Christ, where he dwelleth undoubtedly very God and very Man, in the incomprehensible glory of His Father, to Whom be all praise, honor and glory now and ever. Amen." This exhortation, being addressed to the whole congregation, was delivered from the pulpit and accordingly the rubric following reads: "The exhortation ended, the minister cometh down from the pulpit, and sitteth at the table, every man and woman in likewise taking their place as occasion best serveth." The Scotch were very decided in preferring the sitting posture at the communion. At the Westminster Assembly they as stubbornly resisted the attempt of the puritans to enact simultaneous communion in the pews as they did the efforts of James and Charles to enforce kneeling. They held it to be essential to the symbolism of the ordinance that the participants should "come forward" to a table set and prepared. On this point independency has won the day. There



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are so many things to commend communicating without leaving the seats that the practice objected to at Westminster has become almost universal. It is still customary in some places to spread strips of linen on the book-board so as to represent a table, and not so very long ago the square pews then in use in St. John Presbyterian church in this city were appropriated to the communicants on "Sacrament Sabbath," and in the centre of each was placed a small table covered with a white cloth. The tables are still "in evidence," but have long since been devoted to less sacred purposes. In this way some reverence was shewn to the ancient custom. But kneeling is as much objected to as ever and for the same reasons. It is an attitude of worship, not of reverence merely, and implies the adoration of a local divine presence in the elements.

The Eucharistic, or consecration prayer is then offered up, the Minister holding a piece of the bread in his hand meantime as I have myself seen some old ministers do. This prayer has the common defect of the other reformed liturgies, including the Anglican office, there is no formal invocation of the Holy Spirit. The Romish church teaches that the utterance of the words "This is my Body," constitutes the act of consecration, but the reformers strenuously contended that the essential part of the service was the invocation of the Holy Spirit through whose influence upon believers they were enabled to receive and feed upon Christ's Body and Blood by faith. The omission is common to all the Reformed liturgies, but why it is left out we only can surmise. The doctrine of the Scottish church is beyond question. A rubric at the close of the service, and which is peculiar to the John Knox Liturgy, distinctly repudiates the Romish view, and one of the objections to Laud's liturgy, as it was an objection of the Presbyterians to the Anglican at the Savoy conference, was that this point was not brought out with sufficient clearness. The Westminster Directory, which is the authoritative standard of the church today, instructs the minister in the consecration prayer "earnestly to pray to God the Father of all mercies, and God of all Consolation, to vouchsafe His gracious Presence, and the effectual working of His Spirit in us, and so to sanctify these Elements, both of Bread and of Wine, and to bless His own Ordinance, that we may receive by faith the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ crucified for us, and so to feed upon Him, that He may be one with us, and we one with him." The sacramental doctrine of the Presbyterian church is far higher than that of the Anglican Prayerbook, and it has ever regarded the ordinance with the profoundest reverence. Our view is endorsed by the Greek church, which holds the Roman Mass to be invalid for want of the Invocation.

Immediately after the consecration prayer "the Minister breaketh the bread, and delivereth it to the people, who distribute and divide the same



among themselves, according to the Saviour Christ's commandment, and likewise he giveth the cup." Whilst the communion elements were being partaken of some portion of Scripture was read as the rubric explains "to the intent that our eyes and senses may not only be occupied in these outward signs of bread and wine, which are called the visible Word, but that our hearts and minds also may be fully fixed in the contemplation of the Lord's death, which is by this holy Sacrament represented." In the rubric the Lord's Supper is called "The Action." We have not come across the explanation of this term, but it is probably connected with the words "This do in remembrance of Me," and may have been a pre-reformation word. It is perpetuated in the name given to the sermon, preceding the administration of the ordinance, "The action sermon."\* When all the communicants have been served, the Minister offers a prayer of thanksgiving, and, after singing the 103rd Psalm, the congregation is dismissed with the benediction. Following the communion service is

#### THE FORM OF MARRIAGE.

The ceremony was to be performed, after publication of banns, on Sabbath immediately before sermon. In 1600 there is a decision of the Kirk Session of Glasgow to the effect that "those who go away after marriage or baptism, and stay not the sermon, shall be counted totally absent," and therefore liable to some unpleasant consequences. We can imagine what a trial this must have been to blushing brides and bashful bridegrooms, not to speak of the distraction to the devotions of some others who would be more interested in the young couple than in the sermon. The original of this service is found in the liturgy of Neuchatel composed by Farel in 1553. It begins with an address on marriage, its divine institution and sacred character. This followed by a solemn charge to the parties to be married in exactly the same words as in the Anglican office, and the usual challenge of a public character inviting objections. It may interest some to know the precise words in which our grandparents, many times removed, plighted troth, this portion of the service is as follows;

"If no cause be alleged, the minister proceedeth, saying (to the man):"

"Forasmuch as no man speaketh against this thing, you N, shall protest here before God and His holy congregation, that you have taken, and are now contented to have M, here present for your lawful wife, promising to keep her, to love and entreat her in all things, according to the duty of a faithful husband, forsaking all other during her life; and briefly, to live in an holy conversation with her, keeping faith and truth in all points, according as the Word of God and His holy Gospel doth command."

\*Dr. Pollock informs me that the word is from the French, where the full expression is "*Action de grace*."

"The answer: Even so I take her, before God, and in the presence of this His Congregation."

"The minister to the Spouse also saith: You M, shall protest here before the face of God, and in the presence of His Congregation that ye have taken, and are now contented to have N. here present for your lawful Husband, promising to him subjection and obedience, forsaking all others during his life; and finally to live in an holy conversation with him, keeping faith and truth in all points, as God's Word doth prescribe."

"The answer: Even so I take him, before God, and in the presence of this His Congregation."

The ring was not used, having been regarded as a heathen superstition imported into the church, and connected with it were certain Romish ceremonies denounced as vain and idolatrous. The same prohibition of the ring stands in our Directory, but it is now very generally used. In old times the ring was worn by married women, but the placing of it on the finger was not a formal ceremony. Perhaps the ceremony was none the less delightful for being informal. After the nuptial benediction, which was in the same words as are used still in the Church of England, the 128th Psalm was sung as the wedding party retired to their seats.

#### THE ORDER OF BAPTISM,

which follows next, requires that the child be "brought to the church on the day appointed to common prayer and preaching, accompanied by the father and godfather." Private baptism was forbidden, as it is still disapproved of, except in cases of necessity, for the sacraments were correctly viewed as "church ordinances," in which the congregatian, as a corporate body, took part. In common with other Reformed Churches and the Church of England still, the Scottish Church retained the sponsors, or godparents, along with the parents. We find these at a very early date in the primitive church. They represented the congregation and were a recognition of the responsibility devolving upon the whole brotherhood in regard to the new member then enrolled by baptism. They stood pledged on behalf of the church to care for the child's temporal and spiritual welfare should the parents die, or become in any way unable to fulfil their part. The office was never abolished by law in our church, but is another of the ancient and Catholic institutions which we have lost through the operation of the same influences which have assimilated our church in so many respects to the non-liturgical communions of England. One of Knox's sons had for godfather, Whittingham, Dean of Durham, and the other Coverdale, Bishop of Exeter, translator of the Bible into English, and whose version of the Psalms is that still sung in Episcopal churches. The practice was defended as "maintaining a sweet communion among the

faithful by a conjunction of friendship." We miss a very sacred and tender bond of Christian friendship 'by isolating the parents from their brethren as in our present practice. The service is somewhat protracted according to our modern notions, but it is rich in sound doctrine upon the important subject of the child's relationship to the church and the effect of baptism upon his spiritual condition. After an address to the sponsors, the father, or, in his absence, the godfather, repeated the Apostles' Creed. This was expounded by the minister in an elaborate manner and concluded with prayer followed by the Lord's Prayer, although that was used again in the regular service. The child is then named and baptized by laying water upon its forehead. Immersion is not referred to and indeed was not practised, even by Anabaptists, until long after the Reformation. Our directory refers to it only by implication, and but a single vote in the Westminster Assembly saved the custom from its ban. A prayer of thank-giving concludes the service. The next section of the book is

#### "A TREATISE OF FASTING."

This was drawn up by Knox in compliance with an order of assembly in 1565. It treats of the Scripture authority for fasting and the present necessity of resorting to it. The fast, contrary to all ancient canons, is appointed for two Sabbaths, because that day is the most convenient for worship. This is an apparent reminiscence of the Culdee practice of fasting on the Sundays in Lent which Queen Margaret succeeded in correcting. Abstinence from food is to be absolute from 8 p. m. on Saturday until after the second service on Sunday, or till 5 p. m., and then the fast is to be broken with "only bread and drink," and that "with great sobriety." During the eight days games, recreations and "gorgeous apparel" are to be abstained from. The church-goers of those days probably appreciated better than we would the consideration expressed in the following rubric:

"The time that shall be spent, as well before noon as after, must be left to the wisdom of discreet ministers, who can best judge both what the auditors may bear and what themselves are able to sustain. But because this exercise is extraordinary, the time thereof would be somewhat longer than it is used to be in the accustomed assemblies. And yet we would not have it so tedious that it should be noisome to the people. And therefore we think that three hours and [or] less before noon, and two hours at afternoon would be sufficient for the whole public exercise. The rest to be spent in private meditation by every family apart."

The sermons are directed to be of a suitably heart-searching character and a lectionary is prescribed for every service. After the reading of the Lessons the minister and congregation are to spend a quarter of an hour in

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silent meditation and introspection. Daily service, morning and afternoon, is to be held in all cities and towns.

#### CALVIN'S CATECHISM

is bound up with the Liturgy. This was the common church catechism until the Westminster assembly produced that *ne plus ultra* of doctrinal manuals with which we are all familiar. An analysis of this does not come within our present subject. Attached to the catechism are a number of forms of prayer to be used in private houses. Two of these are invested with melancholy interest. The Morning Prayer was being read in the hearing of Admiral Coligny when the assassins burst into his chamber on St. Bartholomew's day, August 24, 1563: and the Evening Prayer was read in Knox's room an hour before his death. His biographer thus describes the occasion.

"At 10 o'clock they read the Evening Prayer, which they had delayed beyond the usual hour, from apprehension that he was asleep. After this exercise was concluded, Dr. Preston asked him if he had heard the prayers. 'Would to God,' said he, 'that you and all men had heard them as I have heard them; I praise God for that heavenly sound.' Regarding the whole book Dr. Sprott says: "Nearly the whole of Knox's liturgy is from earlier Reformed sources and there can be no doubt that these services themselves are, if we except Protestant expressions of doctrine and opinion, mainly from Catholic originals, and may be traced through the whole of Christianity." The coincidences between it and the English Prayer Book are due to common sources, and not to appropriation the one from the other.

Inserted between the Treatise of Fasting and the Catechism were "The CL. Psalms of David in Metre, with divers Notes and Tunes augmented to them." This formed so important a part of the book that it popularly gave name to the whole and deserves special treatment at our hands. The first complete Psalter was issued in 1564 and contained the Psalms alone. Later editions were enlarged by the addition of metrical renderings of The Ten Commandments, The Lord's Prayer, The Veni Creator, The Magnificat, The Song of Moses, The Creed, The Song of Simeon or Nunc Dimittis, &c., with several poetic effusions of a devotional character but no great literary merit. Almost every Psalm had its own tune, and the "Doxology" or "Conclusion" as it was termed—the *Gloria Patri*—was always sung at the close of each. This was the custom from the very beginning of the Reformation. In one edition of the Psalter we find a collect, or "prayer upon the psalm," appended to each. These do not seem to have been used in public worship. They were composed by Augustin Marlorat, one of the Huguenot reformers and a friend of Calvin. They are very beauti-

ful and worthy to be compared with the best in the English Prayer Book.

The organ was gradually disused after the Reformation so that the singing was entirely congregational. This antipathy to the "kist o' whistles" has extended to our own time, and most of us remember the struggle to introduce it, but it is not so generally known that the same opposition to musical instruments in public worship existed in England and that the organ was saved to the church in that country by a very narrow majority in the lower house of convocation.

Early in the 17th century a movement began which aimed at overturning all the ancient customs. It professed to be animated by a desire for spiritual earnestness and scripture truth, but was very self-assertive and uncharitable. This anti-liturgical tendency grew until the Presbyterian church took up a position which has never been held by any other of the national and historical churches, but is characteristic of modern religious bodies. The tyrannical enforcement of a "cast-iron" liturgy produced a reaction against all prescribed forms, both in England and in Scotland. The political alliance with the Puritans tended to increase the number of those who agreed with them in religious matters, so that there arose a bitter controversy in regard to what the malcontents called "the three nocent ceremonies" namely: repeating the Lord's Prayer, singing the "conclusion" to the psalms, and the minister kneeling for private prayer when entering the pulpit. Every effort was made to stem the rising tide of sectarianism. Ministers who discontinued the use of the Lord's Prayer were dealt with by their presbyteries and threatened with deposition if they persisted in their divisive course. Baillie, the epistolatory historian of the Westminster Assembly had special trouble in his parish with some who would not sing the Doxology and tells us that he pleaded with them "to return to your former practice and cheerfully join with me, your pastor, and the rest of the flock, to ascribe to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, that eternal praise which is due to His name." He warned them that "the reject of the 'conclusion' is one of the first steps of Brunism," "and will draw you on to drink down all its errors" and "scunder at and reject our whole Psalms in metre, and then refuse our prayers" and finally "forsake wholly the church." About 1640 this predicted result had been very nearly reached. Set forms of prayers were disused by many ministers; the Lord's Prayer went out of fashion; the Gloria Patri was unsung; the Creed or belief was laid aside; and ministers did not kneel or pray on entering the pulpit. Thus the seeds of discord sown by English sectaries produced a bitter harvest of bigotry, schism and uncharitableness, and we have been reaping it ever since. The saintly Rutherford, Alexander Henderson, the Knox of the second Reformation of the church, Robert Baillie whose letters tell us the most we know about the Westminster Assembly, and all



the other great men of the church vigorously opposed the "novations" and only agreed at last to tolerate them in the hope of securing, by concessions to Puritan prejudices, a united church for the three kingdoms.

Having reviewed at some length the Liturgy of our Fathers, let us gather up the information obtained from other sources in regard to the religious customs connected with the public worship of God, from 1560 to 1645, the date at which the Westminster Directory was formally adopted. As we have already stated, the Second Prayer Book of Edward VI. was used to some extent from 1560 to 1564 or until the Scottish revision of the Book of Geneva was published. We do not know precisely what order of service was followed in this transition period, but after the new liturgy had come into general use we are able to gather pretty full details. Upon the Reader devolved the conduct of the devotional part of the service. These Readers were originally the old parish priests who were not qualified to act as Protestant ministers, or the parish school-masters, or some other godly persons who were licensed to read the common prayers and lessons of scripture at the first part of the service. They were not permitted to baptize, solemnize marriage, or perform any of the peculiar functions of the ministry.

Although the General Assembly ordered in 1581 that no more Readers should be appointed, the office was continued up to the time of the Westminster Assembly. The latest notice we have regarding it is in 1731, when the right of the Marquis of Tweedale to the appointment of a Reader is confirmed. (Wodrow, *Analecta*, vol. iv. p. 215). Their modern representative is the precentor, but he too is passing away before the choir-master and the organ.

At seven o'clock the church bell rang to warn the people to prepare for church. It rang again when the Reader's service began at eight. Each person as he entered the church bowed in silent prayer. There were no pews in the churches but the women had stools, and the men stood. The prayers were read from the lectern as also the lessons of Scripture. For the first the "John Knox Liturgy" was used, and for the latter the Bible was read through in order, not according to any prescribed lectionary. The people knelt in prayer and stood in singing and responded with an "Amen" at the close of the prayers. The Gloria Patri was sung at the end of every psalm, and in some places the Ten Commandments were recited. At the close of the Reader's service the bell rang a third time, and the minister came into the pulpit. He wore a black gown, without any trimming of silk or costly stuff—such meretricious adornments were forbidden by the assembly, and around his neck was a huge *Elisabethan* ruff. He first knelt in private prayer, and then offered up a "conceived" or extempore prayer, and proceeded to the sermon. The men put on their hats when the sermon began, and sometimes the minister donned his too. This was not through any lack of reverence, but because of the draftiness

of the old churches. The same reason has brought the black skull cap into vogue in our own day. The preacher was encouraged sometimes by the applause of his audience. The service closed with the prescribed prayers, and the repetition of the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, followed by a Psalm and the Benediction. In towns and cities, and in many villages there was daily morning and evening prayer, at which the "Psalm Book" was used, and in large towns at least one church was open all day for the accommodation of those who wished to retire for private prayer during the hours of business. This service became very dear to the hearts of the Scottish people.

The church always encouraged extempore prayer, but the people had little liking for it. They held "conceived prayers" to be no prayers at all. The distaste for forms of prayer was introduced by influences from outside the church and, as we have seen, was strongly condemned by the leaders of church life and thought. All shades of opinion united in upholding the the "Psalm Book" or "John Knox Liturgy." The episcopal party vied with the anti-prelatic in doing it honor. The Presbyterian clergy were as empathatic in their disapproval of those who "scundered at read prayers" as the most advanced ritualist of the day. In 1625 the Synod of Fife "appointed that ordinary Readers in congregations shall be tied to read in the public audience of the people only such prayers as are printed in the Psalm Book, and ordained by the Kirk of Scotland to be read publicly." In 1637 Patrick Henderson, the Reader in St. Giles' church, Edinburgh, on that memorable 23rd of July when Jenny Geddes won immortal fame by her cutty stool hurled at the dean's head, read the prayers from the "Psalm Book" at 8 o'clock in the morning, and when he had finished he said, "Adieu, good people, for I think this is the last time of my reading prayers in this place." In the afternoon the new liturgy prepared by Laud was begun but abruptly concluded as we all know, and a national uprising inaugurated "such as had not been known since Bannockburn." This was not caused by any dislike to read prayers, but to a variety of motives, chief amongst which was the one proclaimed by the brave Jenny herself: "Thou fause loon! Wilt thou say mass at my lug." The new book contained incipient Popery.

When in 1638 the famous Glasgow Assembly met and effected the Second Reformation by purging the church of episcopacy, one of the charges against the bishops summoned to its bar was that they had "interdicted morning and evening prayer," that is had been the cause of the disuse of the old liturgy by their attempts to produce a new one. Forty-six of the petitions sent in at the time are preserved in the Register House, Edinburgh, and Dr. Sprott, who has examined them, says: "In none of them have we observed any reference to the question of a liturgy as such, whether discretionary or pre-

scribed, though they all complain of Laud's book as the only form of public worship in the kingdom," and "they refer to the old liturgy in affectionate terms as containing the form of worship received at the Reformation and universally practiced since." The committee of the Glasgow Assembly states, regarding Laud's book, that "it abolishes a lawful and long-used external form of divine service and in its place substituted another." About this time the spirit of opposition to liturgical forms began to prevail, and the General Assembly had already resolved upon the substitution of a Directory for the "Psalm Book," when invited to participate in the deliberations of the Westminster divines.

Our sketch must pause here, 1645 marks an important epoch in the church of our fathers. A study of the Westminster Directory for the Public Worship of God, along with Baillie's letters, will reveal a gallant struggle to preserve the old doctrines and modes of worship under a modern garb, but it was a failure. The directory has never been adhered to with the same loyal obedience as the Liturgy of Knox, and in nearly every point of controversy the spirit of Independency has been victorious. We need a Third Reformation in our day which shall restore the rich sacramental teaching of the Reformation symbols; the quiet dignity and devotional purity of its liturgy; and a sense of corporate unity in the church, inspired by a recognition of the indwelling spirit which quickens the mystical Body of Christ.

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